

Catholics in this country number one-sixth or one seventh of the whole population, and accordingly our fair share of those sailors would have been some six hundred. Yet, of those four thousand professional defenders of our country's flag, the number who testified their allegiance to the Cross by attending Mass in the Sydney Cathedral, was not six, but *twelve* hundred.

In the army it is the same story. In every war, from that of the Revolution to that with Spain, the Catholic soldier has stoutly fought his country's battles, and, not infrequently, has gloriously won his country's victories. There is a historical painting in the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, that forms a graphic illustration of the abiding union between Cross and Flag. It represents an impressive scene at the Battle of Gettysburg, when the late Father Corby, C. S. C., (a religious brother and personal friend of my own), standing on a large rock, gave general absolution to the members of the Irish Brigade kneeling before him, while the roar of battle rose and swelled in an adjacent wood. Does any sane man suppose for an instant that those Catholic soldiers—scores of whom lay dead or dying, twenty minutes later—loved the flag less devotedly, defended it less bravely, or died for it less gladly, because of their allegiance to the Cross?

No, Ladies and Gentlemen, there is not, nor has there ever been, any antagonism of the Cross to the Flag. The Republic has never had, and has not now, anything to distrust in Catholicism as a system, or in Catholics as citizens. More than this,—if the "Stars and Stripes" is to float permanently over a triumphant democracy,—if the American Ship of State is to weather the storms which throughout the ages have beset and eventually wrecked other republics and kingdoms and empires, then it will be because those at her helm will have profited by the charts supplied to them, as to all other navigators on the sea of time, by those master mariners of the centuries, the infallible pilots who steer the barque of Peter. Americans during the next century or two may, or may not, in overwhelming numbers accept Catholic dogmas; but one thing is certain: